In the Claim (clean copy as amended)

Please Amend claims 1-2, 5, 8, 11-12, 15, and 18-19 as follows:

Sub C'7

1. (Amended) Chronic implant apparatus for decreasing pressure in a first portion of a vessel of a cardiac structure of a patient comprising a shunt implanted in the cardiac structure communicating with an area outside said first portion, whereby a volume of blood sufficient to reduce pressure in said first portion is released.

Q4

2. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first portion comprises the left ventricle and said pressure is the end diastolic pressure in a patient heart, wherein said shunt is implanted in a septum defining the left ventricle and communicates with the left ventricle, whereby a volume of blood is released from the left ventricle to reduce the end diastolic pressure.

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5. (Amended) Apparatus for decreasing pressure in a left ventricle of a patient comprising a shunt communicating with an area outside said first portion, whereby a volume of blood sufficient to reduce end diastolic pressure in a patient, wherein the shunt comprises a semi-passive check-valve comprising a valve activated by an external signal and communicates with the left ventricle, whereby a volume of blood is released from the left ventricle sufficient to reduce the end diastolic pressure.

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Sub C'7

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8. (Amended) The apparatus of claim5, further comprising a pump in fluid communication with the shunt and having an input connected to the left ventricle and an output connected to a volume of lower pressure.

Sub C'7

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11. (Amended) A method of decreasing pressure in a first portion of a vessel of a cardiac structure of a patient comprising the step of puncturing a vessel wall between the first portion and another portion and implanting a shunt communicating with an area outside said first portion, whereby a volume of blood sufficient to reduce pressure in said first portion is released.

12. (Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the first portion comprises the left ventricle and said pressure is the end diastolic pressure in a patient heart, wherein said shunt is implanted in a septum defining the left ventricle and communicates with the left ventricle, whereby a small volume of blood is released from the left ventricle to reduce the end diastolic pressure.

Sub C'7

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15. (Amended) A method of decreasing end diastolic pressure in a left ventricle of a cardiac structure of a patient comprising the step of implanting a shunt communicating with the left ventricle and an area outside the left ventricle, whereby a volume of blood sufficient to reduce end diastolic pressure is released, and further comprising the step of actuating a semi-passive check-valve by an external signal.

Sub C7 18. (Amended) The method of claim15, further comprising the step of activating a pump in fluid communication with the shunt and having an input connected to the left ventricle and an output connected to a volume of lower pressure.

19. (Amended) The method of claim15, further comprising the step of implanting said shunt, said implanting step comprising the step of deploying a tubular element having two ends and a tissue affixation element disposed at each of said ends via a catheter.